

Senator Patrick Leahy (D), Senator Bernie Sanders (I), and Congressman Peter Welch (D) on Tuesday announced that the Vermont Department of Health will receive \$1.1 million in federal support for public health programs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funding will support a new five-year program to link Vermont's Blueprint for Health with existing public health data, support local public health programs and combat chronic disease. The Vermont grant is part of a \$42.5 million nationwide investment in public health made possible by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R. 3590).

"This investment in the high quality programs run by the Vermont Department of Health will provide an important boost to public health services and improve the quality of care available to all Vermonters," said Leahy, Sanders and Welch. "By strengthening coordination between local, state and national health care authorities, this grant will ensure that Vermonters receive the best public health services available."

According to the Vermont Department of Health, the new award will strengthen Vermont's ability to reduce the costly burden of chronic diseases by increasing attention to preventing illness and complications. It will support the work of the Department's local prevention teams, which implement CDC best practices for health promotion and disease prevention at the local level. The grant will also link public health data systems and electronic health records to evaluate the effectiveness of Department programs.

"We are delighted with this opportunity to strengthen the connections between Health Department programs and Vermont's Blueprint for Health initiative," said Dr. Wendy Davis, Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Health. "Achieving meaningful health reform is not only about reforming the health care delivery system but must include sincere and sustained attention to effective population health and community-based prevention strategies."

In August, Leahy, Sanders and Welch wrote the Department of Health and Human Services in support of Vermont's grant application.

Vermont delegation announces \$1.1 million in funding for public health services

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In their letter, the Vermont delegation wrote, “CDC’s grant program represents a unique and timely opportunity for Vermont to systematically increase the performance management capacity of its public health departments. The grant would assist Vermont in ensuring that public health goals are effectively and efficiently met.”